

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (previously presented) A BTL amplifying apparatus having two power amplifiers in a BTL configuration for driving a speaker, comprising:

muting means for muting an input signal to be supplied to the power amplifiers during a predetermined length of time;

detection means for detecting a differential voltage to provide a DC offset between outputs from the two power amplifiers while no input signal is supplied to the power amplifiers by the muting means; and

decision means for deciding whether or not said differential voltage is larger than a prescribed voltage;

switches connected between output terminals of the power amplifiers and the speaker, whereby the switches are turned off when it is decided that the differential voltage is larger than the prescribed voltage, for preventing the speaker from being supplied with the output signals from the power amplifiers.

2. (currently amended)) A BTL amplifying apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

volume means for adjusting a signal level of said input signal to the amplifiers; and,

wherein, the muting means for muting mutes the input signal to be supplied from said volume means to the power amplifiers during a predetermined length of time required to provide the DC offset by stopping the input signal to the amplifiers.

3. (previously presented) A BTL amplifying apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said detection means for detecting the DC offset is brought into operation when a power switch is turned on, or a signal source is switched.

4. (Original) A BTL amplifying apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said volume means is an electronic volume.

5. (currently amended) ~~A BTL amplifying apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:~~ A BTL amplifying apparatus having two power amplifiers in a BTL configuration for driving a speaker, comprising:

muting means for muting an input signal to be supplied to the power amplifiers during a predetermined length of time;

detection means for detecting a differential voltage to provide a DC offset between outputs from the two power amplifiers while no input signal is supplied to the power amplifiers by the muting means;

decision means for deciding whether or not said differential voltage is larger than a prescribed voltage; and

activation/deactivation means for activating/deactivating the power amplifiers, which deactivates said power amplifiers when it is decided that the DC offset is larger than said prescribed voltage by the decision means.

6. (canceled)

7. (previously presented) A BTL amplifying apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

warning means for giving a warning when it is decided that said DC offset is larger than said prescribed voltage by said decision means.

8. (previously presented) A BTL amplifying apparatus according to claim 5, further comprising:

volume means for adjusting a signal level of said input signal to said power amplifiers;
and

muting means for muting said input signal to be supplied from said volume means during a predetermined length of time,

wherein while the input signal is muted by said muting means, when said power amplifiers are activated by the activation/deactivation means, an operation of the muting means is discontinued after said predetermined length of time has elapsed.

9. (currently amended) An apparatus, comprising:

- a first amplifier which at least indirectly receives an input signal;
- a second amplifier which at least indirectly receives the input signal; and
- a control circuit;

wherein the control circuit detects a differential voltage between a first output signal output from the first amplifier and a second output signal output from the second amplifier to provide a DC offset; ~~and~~

wherein the control circuit determines whether or not the DC offset is larger than a prescribed voltage, and

wherein the control circuit detects the DC offset when the input signal is muted and no input signal is supplied to the amplifiers.

Claim 10 (canceled).

11. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the first amplifier at least indirectly amplifies the input signal to generate the first output signal.

Claim 12 (canceled).

13. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the second amplifier at least indirectly amplifies the input signal to generate the second output signal.

Claim 14 (canceled).

15. (currently amended) ~~The apparatus of Claim 9, including:~~ An apparatus, comprising:
a first amplifier which at least indirectly receives an input signal;
a second amplifier which at least indirectly receives the input signal; and
a control circuit;
wherein the control circuit detects a differential voltage between a first output signal
output from the first amplifier and a second output signal output from the second amplifier to
provide a DC offset,
wherein the control circuit determines whether or not the DC offset is larger than a
prescribed voltage, and
further comprising:
a volume control circuit adapted to adjust a signal level of the input signal supplied to the
first and second amplifiers; and
a muting control circuit adapted to mute the input signal supplied to the first and second
amplifiers for a predetermined length of time.

16. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the control circuit performs at least one of detecting the differential voltage to provide the DC offset and determining whether or not the DC offset is larger than the prescribed voltage responsive to a condition of at least one of a power switch and a signal source.

17. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the input signal is provided by an electronic volume.

18. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 9, including at least one activation/deactivation circuit adapted to activate or deactivate at least one of the first and second amplifiers responsive to the determination of whether or not the DC offset is larger than the prescribed voltage.

19. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 9, including a switch between at least one of the first and second amplifiers and a speaker, wherein the switch is adapted to prevent at least one of the first and second output signals from being supplied to the speaker responsive to the determination of whether or not the DC offset is larger than the prescribed voltage.

20. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 9, including a warning circuit adapted to activate a warning device responsive to the determination of whether or not the DC offset is larger than the prescribed voltage.

21. (currently amended) ~~The apparatus of Claim 16, including:~~ An apparatus,
comprising:

- a first amplifier which at least indirectly receives an input signal;
- a second amplifier which at least indirectly receives the input signal; and
- a control circuit;
- wherein the control circuit detects a differential voltage between a first output signal
output from the first amplifier and a second output signal output from the second amplifier to
provide a DC offset;
- wherein the control circuit determines whether or not the DC offset is larger than a
prescribed voltage,
- wherein the control circuit performs at least one of detecting the differential voltage to
provide the DC offset and determining whether or not the DC offset is larger than the prescribed
voltage responsive to a condition of at least one of a power switch and a signal source,
- and further comprising:
- a volume control circuit adapted to adjust a signal level of the input signal supplied to the
first and second amplifiers; and
- a muting control circuit adapted to mute the input signal supplied to the first and second
amplifiers for a predetermined length of time;

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wherein at least one of the first and second amplifiers is activated by ~~the~~an
activation/deactivation circuit and the muting control circuit removes the mute from the input
signal after the predetermined length of time has passed.